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"As the number of candidates nominated exceeds the number of vacancies, an election will take place by means of the single transferable vote.

"Under Regulation II (5) of the Regulations for the holding of elections by means of the single transferable vote, I appoint 1-30 p.m. to 5 p.m. to-day as the time for the holding of the election. Voting papers containing the names of the candidates can be had from the Secretary from 1-30 p.m. The counting of votes will commence at 5 p.m. to-day."

III

A BILL TO AMEND THE MADRAS DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES ACT, THE MADRAS LOCAL BOARDS ACT AND THE MADRAS GENERAL CLAUSES ACT.

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I have to announce to the House that I nominate Mr. T. C. Srinivasa Ayyangar as the Chairman of the Select Committee appointed yesterday to consider the Bill to amend the Madras District Municipalities Act, the Madras Local Boards Act and the Madras General Clauses Act."

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI :—"Mr. President, Sir, may I ask you one question with regard to a certain matter which happened here? Day before yesterday, Mr. President, you allowed the House to continue the sitting after 5 p.m. Probably you came to that decision because the Government represented to you that, if the business was not finished that day, it could not be finished as there would be no further sitting of the Council on Saturday. May I therefore take it that your ruling to continue the sitting that day after 5 p.m. was due to that particular information?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"Not at all."

IV

RESOLUTIONS ON MATTERS OF GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST.

COMMITTEE TO ENQUIRE INTO THE GRIEVANCES OF RYOTS IN FOREST AREAS.[a]

* Mr. A. PARASURAMA RAO :—"Mr. President, Sir, yesterday I was submitting to the House the grievances the people were suffering under the existing forest administration. I want to add something more to the list of those grievances. First of all, I would take the forest fires. No doubt there has been difference of opinion with regard to the utility of forest fires. I do not want to enter into that debatable question. I would only submit for the consideration of this House that there is a general impression in the country that the early burning that is now advocated by the department is taken advantage of by some dishonest officials of the subordinate staff in the department because the work they are entrusted with will have to be completed by the end of the official year, i.e., 31st March. Early burning, fortunately for them and unfortunately for the people synchronises with that period. As soon as the early burning commences it is possible for them to

[a] Mr. K. R. KARANT :—
That this Council recommends to the Government to appoint a committee of the members of this Council to enquire and investigate into the alleged grievances and hardships of the ryots in the forest areas of the province in regard to the administration of the Forest department and also into the allaged abuse of privileges by the ryots and suggest remedies to redress grievances and stop abuses and also to suggest any change that may be necessary in the forest policy of the Government.

explain the matter of the execution of the work by saying that the whole work has to be completed by them was actually completed as there. Then the bill will have to be passed for payment even though no work has been completed or executed by that time.

12-15 p.m. "So far as the honesty of the subordinates of the Forest department is concerned, I have to state that. Apart from that, there is another thing which is very important and which vitally concerns the people. That is the villagers who live in hamlets bordering on the reserve forests appear to have a duty towards the forest officials in helping to put down the fires when they do occur, and it is left to the petty officials of the department to say whether the villagers of any particular hamlet did actually help them in putting down the fires or not. Once the petty official is prepared to say that the people of a particular village have not co-operated with him in putting down a fire, his recommendation will be to visit that village with a penalty, i.e., either to close the reserves against the grazing of the cattle of the village or to levy an enhanced rate of grazing fees to be paid by that village. The power of punishing the villagers is placed in the hands of either a forester or even a subordinate of his, the forest guard; because it is not expected that a range officer or any superior officer of the Forest department could be present at the time a forest fire occurs in any area. This naturally causes considerable heart-burning in the villagers and even the slightest friction caused between the villagers of a particular village and the petty official will result in serious consequences to the village concerned. This is a case to which the hon. the Law Member should give his best attention so far as the interests of the villagers are concerned.

"The next thing is that there are coupes set apart for grazing and permits are issued for grazing in such coupes. So far as such coupes in the Ceded districts are concerned, many of them do not contain any provision for drinking water, and so, the cattle that go to such coupes for grazing purposes have to return home for drinking water. Even when water is available in the vicinity, because water is contained only in coupes which are not open for grazing purposes, such water could not be used for drinking purposes. This difficulty ought somehow or other to be removed.

"The next point is that so far as the Cuddapah district is concerned, there was only one forest officer there some time ago; but now for every cardinal point there is a District Forest Officer. No doubt I should say that district has a larger area of forest than any other, but that does not mean the number of forest officers should be multiplied to any extent. The result of such multiplication can be seen by any casual observer who had knowledge of the district as it was some time ago and who now sees the districts; he will at once come to the conclusion that instead of there being an increase of augmentation of the forests, there has been a denudation of the forests. That will show clearly that the forest officers are depending on the forest itself, and as such they are responsible to a great extent for the disappearance of the major portion of the forest. This is an anomalous condition I should say. The multiplication of the number of officers has resulted in this unsatisfactory and awkward position.

"As for the panchayat forests, no doubt anyone who sees the administration reports will surely consider that they are working very satisfactorily; but

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as one who knows the actual state of affairs not only in the Ceded districts but also in some other bordering districts, I make bold to say that what is contained in the reports is not after all a true representation of the actual facts. It is highly objectionable to say that the forests have been handed over to the management of private individuals under an agreement, which agreement is entirely a closed book so far as the outside public is concerned. It is not published anywhere, it is not available to anybody who may ask for it; but it is a sealed book to every one. It is only known to persons who enter into an agreement with the Government and who execute the same; and even those people are not allowed to know what exactly were the conditions under which they subscribed to that document. The whole thing evidently is in a printed form, and the officer who is interested in seeing that he multiplies the area under the forest panchayats, goes and prevails upon the people of a particular village and makes them sign the document, the people themselves not knowing the consequences of the undertaking given by them. I can tell you, Sir, as an example that if a forest offence is committed in an area which has been handed over to the forest panchayat, the latter is not responsible for the prosecution of the delinquent. It is not the person who is in charge of the forest actually or who has detected the offence that can prosecute, but it is left to the Government officer either to prosecute or not to prosecute the offender. If that is the position of a person who is responsible for the upkeep of a particular portion of the forest, I should say it is not within his power to maintain it or to guard it properly. Because, if any person infringes the law and removes any forest produce against the wish of the forest panchayat, then the forest panchayat members must be entirely at the mercy of the Government officers who may or may not care to take any steps so far as the wrong-doer is concerned. Further, unless these panchayats are placed on any statutory basis and a law is enacted in order to validate their actions and exactly define the rights of the panchayatdars, I think it is not possible to manage these forest panchayats properly and to the satisfaction of the people.

"Further, as has been pointed out by the hon. Members of this House, the area that is handed over to the forest panchayats mostly consists of bald mountains without any sort of material useful for the villagers."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"The hon Member has already exceeded his time-limit."

Mr. A. PARASURAMA RAO :—"I shall close my speech, Sir. The area that is handed over to the panchayats is generally without any sort of grazing facilities. With these words, I heartily support the proposition so ably moved by my hon. Friend."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"Mr. A. B. Shetty seems to have given notice of an amendment. It was given yesterday evening, I was told. Has any hon. Member objection on the ground of short notice?"

The hon. Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—"Yes, Sir. I object."

* The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I allow the objection."

* Rao Bahadur Sir A. P. PATRO :—"Mr. President, Sir, I am glad the hon. Member in charge of the department has stated to the Council that he

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is reconsidering the whole forest policy or reviewing the policy and that he will very soon give the benefit of his investigation to this House so that the Council may have an opportunity of examining the same. But it would have been more gratifying if he had stated what time he would take for the consideration of the whole question of forest policy, especially with reference to the improvement of the condition of the cultivating ryots and the peasants of this Presidency.

"Sir, the forest policy of this Government consists of two parts, viz., one relating to the reserve forests and secondly with regard to exploitation, leaving alone the other the development and improvement of the existing forests and forest areas. We have now to see what the policy of the Government has been and how it has affected the ryots. Sir, the grievances of the ryots are manifold in the matter of the forest administration. The forest administration is one of those matters which affect the life and well-being of the peasants and the ryots in rural areas, and great discontent in rural areas is no less due to the maladministration of the forest rules and regulations. I do not now say anything against the rules and regulations framed, but my objection is as to the application of the rules that give room for friction and discontent among the rural population. You will notice, Sir, that in every direction the ryot is heavily taxed. If he wants to have good cattle grown up in order to have his land properly cultivated, he has to pay grazing fees; if he wants to have a good plough and improved plough he has to pay a tax; if he wants to take pieces of wood from the forests, he has to pay fees for it; if he wants to build a hut for himself and his family and children who toil in the fields througout the day and improve his accommodation, he has to pay for it; if he wants to cut grass in the reserved areas for his household purposes, he will have to pay a tax again; if he wants to have his produce taken out from one village to another, there again he has to pay a toll. These are all items of expenditure which may look very small indeed, but considering the average earnings of the villager and the ryot, considering his present economic position, he and his people are not able to get on, under present circumstances in the country, surely, these taxes are heavy. In addition to these, he has to put up with the tyranny of the subordinate officials. There are unfortunate cases like those which Mr. Karant has placed before the House. It is not only with regard to the district of South Kanara that those grievances exist but they exist in regard to all the districts in the Presidency. The reserves extend, in some cases to almost to the backyard of the huts of the ryot and the cultivating peasant, and therefore he has to put up with innumerable tyrannies from the subordinate officials. These are matters of common knowledge, but the difficulty is how to rectify them. I do not say that altogether the forest officials are to be blamed. The peasants, in their anxiety to obtain as much convenience as possible, are prone to break the rules and regulations. They do break the rules and regulations and they are not able to keep within the limits of the rules, and they are unable to see that they do not trespass into the reserved areas. Sometimes the reserved areas consist of such land which make it absolutely impossible for the ryot to resist the temptation of sending out his cattle or of going into them for getting some pieces of wood for himself. It is not therefore possible for the ryot to carry out to the very letter the rules and regulations. At the same time, on the side of the officials, it must be said that they must carry out their duties. The position therefore is

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this: that we have reached a stage when we are not able to observe the rules of the Forest department as they are and we have also reached a stage where the people find it difficult to carry out those rules. The situation must be solved; and if we do not go to the relief of the agricultural population and of the peasantry, what is the good of our formulating high political schemes which will benefit only the educated people of the country. We are here in order to represent the real people, and therefore it is absolutely necessary that the interests of the real people should be safeguarded. This is a case in point; here are the people, the rural population, subjected to several difficulties and petty tyrannies from subordinate officials.

"We have also seen from the statements made by hon. Members before this House what difficulties the ryots encounter when they want to get some facilities from the forest areas. For instance, green manure is used in certain districts, though it is not used in all the districts uniformly. I know as a matter of fact the Forest department is giving facilities for green manure, and green leaves are allowed to be taken away for manurial purposes. With regard to green manure there is no grievance worth mentioning. The difficulty lies in the reserved forest extending to the backyards of ryots' houses, as I said already. The reserve forest should be taken three miles away from the limits of the village, so that the people and cattle may have a proper margin for moving about in the neighbourhood of the village. It is that, we are insisting upon most, and it is absolutely necessary in the interest and convenience of the people, as I submitted, that the Government should review the whole policy pursued in this matter and see that the burden on the ryots in the shape of taxes and fees should be relieved. So far with regard to small forests. 12-30 p.m.

"I may also note that within the last few years it has been the policy of the Forest department to treat some forests as unreserved. After the classification of the forests into five classes, some small forests were handed over to the management of panchayats, and they are called ryots' forests, working under the revenue administration. There lies the whole trouble. Well, we have got the forest panchayats, to which the department so generously handed over the management so that the forest may be useful to the ryots in their every-day affairs. But there comes the jurisdiction of the Revenue department, and what advantages are given by the Government in connexion with forest panchayats are minimised by the control of the Revenue department. Therefore, in many places, the forest panchayats are not at all able to do as much as they would otherwise have done, if the control by the Revenue department had been exercised properly. As I said, while we are grateful to the Government for handing over an extent of 3,000 square miles of forests to forest panchayats, we find we are deprived of the full benefit of it by the rigorous control exercised by the Revenue department. That is a matter which requires careful investigation by the Government before they come to any conclusion on the working of the forest panchayats.

"With regard to bigger forests or the commercial side of the forest policy, I cannot have any praise at all for the Forest department. Eight years ago, I raised my protest against the opening of the Russellkonda Saw Mill, and it has proved true. Last year, when I was discussing the report of

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the Public Accounts Committee I thought the prospects of the Russellkonda Saw mill looked brighter, and the accounts seemed to show a profit. The visit of the two hon Members of Government was considered to bring in a change or a new system of working the concern. But, so far as the Russellkonda Saw Mill is concerned, I see after all it is a colossal failure. Huge plant had been put in without any consideration of the kind or quality of material available in the forests. Some firm had some plant to dispose of, and it was conveniently taken hold of without any investigation into the use of it or the quality of timber available, in order to make the plant a profitable one. Last year we expected the mill to yield some profit. Now, Sir, we find that the mill is closed. What is to become of it? The machinery cannot be purchased by any particular persons nor can it be utilized for any other purpose. What is to be done with it? A co-operative society has applied for taking up its management for other purposes. This is a good opportunity. No doubt, it would in course of time be proved that the whole capital invested in the mill is a waste and a loss to the country. I raised my protest eight years ago, and it is now quite clear that the Government have made a serious blunder in taking up the concern themselves

"The same thing we find, when we refer to the administration report of last year, with reference to the Chenat Nair forest. I do not find my hon. Friend representing Malabar here just now Mr. Thampan and he has been fighting and saying that Chenat Nair forest would never be a commercial success. Year after year, we have seen the administration report giving a minus balance. In the previous report there was a loss of about Rs. 1·50 lakhs, and the current report says the loss would be Rs. 2,48,000. Therefore, the management of the Chenat Nair forest as a commercial concern is not at a success. I quite realize that you cannot expect any profits immediately in these cases. We must also face deficits. After a number of years of experiment and deficits, you must gather lessons from such experiences and then rectify the mistakes that were made in the previous years and gradually bring the business into working order. I quite realize it. But knowing it, I raise these two points regarding Russellkonda Saw Mill and Chenat Nair forest in order to show that the real difficulty is in attending to the requirements of the peasant. The taxes, fees and duties which are now affecting so detrimentally the people of the rural areas may be lightened at once. It is from that point of view I say that while you have got great losses on big schemes on one side, you have also lost the confidence and popularity of the people in the villages on the other side, which is more dangerous ('Hear, hear') than the losses you sustained in Russellkonda and Chenat Nair forest. What I would urge on the Government is to gain the confidence of the people, of the ryots and peasants, for whom both the Government and ourselves claim to be trustees It is more in the interests of the ryot and the peasant who is suffering under the pressure of the laws in his every-day concern that you should do everything. Therefore, I am sure the hon. the Law Member, who has expressed himself so very sympathetically with the resolution, would work up some plan or scheme to give relief to the ryots and peasants."

(At this stage the hon. the Deputy President took the Chair.)

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Sriman BISWANATH DAS Mahasayo:—" Madam, my hon. Friend, the Law Member, who is also in charge of the Forest department, knows that his predecessors including Sir Arthur Knapp declared in this House in no unmistakable terms that they would very soon see that the reserve forest areas are removed from the village sites at least by one mile. Now, coming to Ganjam district, in the case of the Gumsoor forest, the Surada forest and the Mahiri forest, you will see that there are villages not only within one mile of them but there are village sites attached to the reserve. The result is that the poor villager is troubled not only by wild beasts but also by the forest officials. This difficulty and this trouble has been a common factor in at least three taluks of the Ganjam district, namely, Gumsoor, Surada and Berhampur. Then, Madam, the Mahiri forest, which is not at all a forest, is classed as a reserve forest, and the Government has to employ an Extra Assistant Conservator for the maintenance of that forest. Thus, this forest brings trouble to the ordinary villager in his daily avocation and also is a source of increasing the spending power of the Forest department. These forest officials have got a free hand in discharging their duties. The Madras Forest Act, unfortunately, presumes that a man is guilty until he himself establishes his innocence, which is the opposite of the principle contained in the Evidence Act in respect of a criminal. That is one of the reasons why forest officials find it an easy game to feed fat on the villagers and trouble those living in the neighbourhood of the forest areas. It is therefore a serious matter for consideration of the Government so that at least those villages which are touching upon reserve forests are given some relief.

" Then, Madam, coming to the forest policy of the Government, I must say that the Government ought to have taken sufficient care to see that a certain amount of enquiry is made before the Forest Act is extended to private forests. Well, Madam, in many cases in the Presidency of Madras, the Government as a matter of course extend the operation of the Madras Forest Act to proprietary forests. In my district there are at least five or six proprietary forests which have come under the operation of the Act. The result is, as I have already pointed out in many debates in this House, that it has been a handy weapon in the hands of the proprietor to oppress the poor ryots in all possible ways. The reason is this: the proprietor himself and his officials are declared as forest officers under the Act The forest officer has got very independent and important powers. He can detain anything, he can detain any cart or bullocks, or carts laden with wood; he can attach property thus usurping to himself all the powers that the police have. These powers have always been to the great disadvantage of the proprietary tenants. These facts have been repeated in this Council time after time, and it was said on behalf of Government that where proprietary forests are reserved a committee consisting of the representatives of the ryots and of the zamindars would be appointed with a Government official in it, so as to decide which of the forest areas should be reserved and which kinds of wood should be prohibited from being cut. I may assure the hon. Member in charge of forests that in some cases of forests which have come under the operation of the Forest Act since 1924 none of these undertakings have been complied with. The result is that almost all the forest has been reserved in spite of the rules framed by His Excellency the Governor in Council that

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certain forest areas should be set apart for the use of the neighbouring villagers. And then, Madam, in the operation of the Forest Act there has been a clear rule that in unreserved forests no tax should be levied and no fees should be collected. I can assure the hon. Member in charge of the forests and also this hon. House that in all cases in these private forests proprietors have trespassed upon the rights of these villagers in spite of these rules. I have got evidence tendered by zamindary officials in court that they had been collecting these fees in spite of rule 5 of the Forest Rules, framed under the Madras Forest Act So the result is that Government have not been only abetting the crime of oppressing these tenants but also aiding—actually aiding—by extending the operation of the Act. That is a policy which has to be condemned and I should be very glad that an enquiry be instituted to see how far the policy of the Act and the rules have been complied with. Then, Madam, these proprietory forests that have been reserved do not at all deserve to be called reserved forests. In many cases even ordinary village tracts have been included and lands that have been cultivated have also been included in the reserve forest area. The result is it becomes impossible for the ryot to go from one plot of the land to another without paying something to these forest guards. These forest guards are subordinate to private owners, that is, proprietors who in many cases do not like the tenants. So this is an easy weapon to oppress tenants either directly themselves or through the help of the forest officials. This is a very important weapon upon which I think the hon. Member in charge of the forests will give directions in the event of the appointment of a committee to enquire. And then, Madam, the grazing difficulties is a question upon which many of the previous speakers have been very emphatic. In my district one ranger has been able to make thousands of rupees annually for himself. All these have been brought to the notice of the Forest officials and a special officer was appointed to investigate into the matter. I have reason to believe that a very strong report has been made against him and yet no action has been taken against him. This encourages oppression and creates the terror in the minds of the people that no report and no evidence against a forest officer however strong it might be, would be of any avail. So, I think the hon. the Law Member, who I feel sure has ample sympathy for the ryot and who is an advocate of the ryot (A voice : Past tense) who was and who still is an earnest advocate of the ryot will see that the poor ryot is given some protection and revise the forest policy of the Government."

12-45 p.m.

*Mr. A. B. SHETTY :—" Madam, as the hon. the Law Member objected to the amendment which I was proposing to move with the approval of the Mover of the resolution and with the intention of making it easier for the Law Member to accept the resolution, I propose to speak on the main resolution itself. I do not wish to repeat what I said on this matter during the last budget discussion. The comprehensive circular issued by the Government of India so far back as 1894 is said to still govern the policy of the forest administration. It laid down that this policy should be so directed as to serve agricultural interests and that, subject to certain conditions, the claims of cultivation should be regarded as stronger than the claims of forest reservation and that in regulating and restricting the privileges of people

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living near forest areas the cardinal principle to be observed is that those rights and privileges must be limited only to such an extent as is absolutely necessary to secure advantage for the general public. Now the Royal Commission on agriculture have cordially expressed their entire agreement with the exposition of the general policy as laid down in this circular. Are the interests and the needs of the people living in the vicinity of forests made the first consideration on the part of the forest management in accordance with the declared policy of Government on the subject? So far as I can see in my own district I find that things are not at all improving. The Chief Conservator of Forests has lately given a warning that the concessions granted to the ryots will be withdrawn, on the ground that there has been extensive abuse of these privileges. I am afraid that many of the ryots concerned do not know the exact nature of the concessions that have been granted to them. It therefore needs investigation whether there has really been abuse of these privileges to the extent alleged and whether measures cannot be taken to prevent such abuses instead of withdrawing these concessions from the people. The Government in reply to a letter of mine have admitted that it will be a distinct hardship if these privileges are withdrawn. Let the committee find out what can be done in this matter. The Madras Government have been complimented for having taken the step of handing over the management of some of the village forests to panchayats and the Royal Commission on Agriculture have expressed that this system of panchayat management of village forests has so many desirable features about it and that every attempt should be made to make it a success. Yet we are told that in South Kanara there are no forests suitable for ordinary panchayat management. So far in my district there are only ten panchayats under what is called the village forest system and these are all under the control of the Forest department itself. I understand from the president of one of these panchayats that the forest guards and the section officer usually hate these panchayat system, try to find fault with the panchayat management and they take every possible occasion to make reports against the panchayat to their higher officers. Last year they have inserted a new condition in the agreement which the panchayatdars are required to execute. It is for making the panchayatdars clear and firetrace the exterior lines of the reserved forests at their own cost. The Forest department were doing this work themselves before the establishment of these panchayats. The panchayats have no source of income. Yet they are asked to do this work which the department was doing at its own cost prior to the establishment of panchayats and as a result of this four of the eight panchayats in the North Mangalore division have refused to renew the agreement and another panchayat also has declined to sign the agreement for some other reason. That means five out of the ten panchayats in the district have not executed the agreement for the year 1927-28. Such is the encouragement given to Forest panchayats in South Kanara (A voice: 'They will be coerced into doing it').

" A notification has been recently published in the *South Kanara Gazette* to the effect that hunting will be allowed in the reserves but only with the previous consent of the District Collector. I understand this privilege was allowed in former years and ryots had only to take the permission of the

range officer in their area and they have not to go to the District Collector. Surely wild animals won't wait till the ryots go through the formality of obtaining the permission of the District Collector. A committee might very well go into these alleged grievances of the ryots and see what could be done to redress them. I feel therefore strongly that this resolution should be acted upon by the Government."

* Mr. D. NARAYANA RAJU :—" One of the previous speakers congratulated the hon. the Law Member in connexion with the resolution before the House. I regret I cannot congratulate the hon. the Law Member. The resolution before the House asks for the appointment of a committee to go into the whole question. The hon. the Law Member came forward with a suggestion that he would prepare a scheme and place it before the House for criticism. There is a world of difference between what is asked for in the resolution and what is suggested by the hon. the Law Member. If a committee is appointed as has been asked for in the resolution, the ryots concerned would have an opportinity of being heard. If a scheme is prepared, it will be prepared on the strength of the Secretariat notes or by the officers in the department. People will have no opportunity of their being heard in the matter. Yesterday my hon. Friend Diwan Bahadur Kesava Pillai was telling us that even the most heartless bureaucrat would melt away when the real sufferings of the ryots were brought home to him. Therefore if the people are heard that would make a very great difference in the matter. The hon. the Law Member must appoint a committee and give an opportunity for the people to be heard in the matter. It is only then that it will be of some advantage to the people concerned. Any scheme that may be prepared on the strength of the advice received from the subordinate officers in the department would be of no avail. Madam, I shall not take the time of the House in detailing the several grievances and hardships of the ryots living near forest reserves as they have already been pointed out to the House by the previous speakers. I wish only to add that these grievances and hardships are not at all confined to the areas represented by those speakers These hardships are the common lot of all the people in all the districts. The hon. the Law Member said yesterday that some of the grievances were peculiar to the districts."

The hon. Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR :—" I beg my friend's pardon What I said was that there were certain grievances peculiar to certain districts."

* Mr. D. NARAYANA RAJU :—" If my hon. Friend only meant that the difficulties and hardships were different in different localities he is quite right. It is exactly so. But if he meant that the forest administration is not equally oppressive in all the districts and that it is less oppressive in certain districts, he is wholly wrong. If he does not mean that, it is good. Of course the difficulties in different localities may take different shapes.

1 p.m. " The hon. the Law Member told us yesterday with an air of satisfaction that about three thousand square miles of reserve forests were transferred to the panchayats. But even in the localities where these panchayats have been working the lot of the ryots is not improved. The tyranny of the forest officers is there. The other day I received a representation from Nallajarla a village in West Godavari, signed both by the panchayatdars and the ryots

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of the village stating that the establishment of the forest panchayat did not in any way mitigate their hardships. If these panchayats are given jurisdiction to try forest offences, there will be some scope for improvement. So long as the officers of the department are invested with powers to try these alleged offenders there is no scope for improvement. If the hon. the Law Member means business he must bring forward a Bill to that end; there is no good of making rules in a matter of this kind. With these remarks I support the resolution and I hope the House would pass it."

Rajkumar S. N. DORAI RAJA :—" I move that the question be put."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" I second it."

Mr. K. KOTI REDDI :—" Madam, the hon. Law Member having consented to frame a scheme, he has practically given out his case, namely that the ryots on whose behalf we are now speaking have not got much grievances. I do not want to detail the many hardships which the ryots are suffering from in the various parts of the Presidency. But in my district, a certain class of people called the *Sugathis* who are tending the cattle on behalf of the ryots are charged extra, because they are supposed to be doing it for their own profit. It works as a hardship not only for the *Sugathis* but also for ryots whose cattle these people are tending.

" At the same time I recognize also the difficulties to which the Government is put. A way must be found to redress the grievances of the ryots without putting undue difficulties in the path of the Government, if the Government is really for the benefit of the people at large. As a matter of fact the forest subordinate officer is a tyrant in his own way. I know that in forest districts the police is not so much a terror as the forest officers. Now, Sir, there are many questions which only a committee can go into, the sympathetic Law Member may frame a scheme in order to afford some relief to the suffering ryots; but after all that will be a scheme that is prepared on materials collected in the Secretariat This question has never been gone into in a detailed form. The present forest policy of the Government is an antiquated one and needs change. For instance there is the question of the economic working of our forests, besides the question of the redress of so many grievances. A time has come for a detailed investigation of the matter. The hon. the Law Member having conceded the existence of grievances, I hope, will go to the extent of accepting the resolution, which merely asks for the appointment of a committee to go into the whole question and make recommendations for the Government to accept or reject. It is not enough if the hon. the Law Member alone is to prepare a scheme."

Rajkumar S. N. DORAI RAJA :—" I move that the question be now put."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" I second it."

The closure motion was put to the House and carried: the resolution was then put to the House and carried.

FEES RECEIVED FROM PAYING PATIENTS IN STATE HOSPITALS.

In the absence of the Kumara Raja of Venkatagiri against whose name the resolution stood, Mr. C. S. Govindaraja Mudaliyar was given leave by the House to move the following resolution: